



# Indiana State Department of Health

## Epidemiology Resource Center



### Adult Viral Hepatitis Prevention Program Newsletter

July 2013

For questions or suggestions, contact  
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#### What's Going On?

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) is looking forward to World Hepatitis Day, July 28, and will work to increase viral hepatitis awareness and education throughout the month of July. Please contact Brittany M. Gross at [bgross@isdh.in.gov](mailto:bgross@isdh.in.gov) to share any education and awareness efforts you are planning. Together we can minimize the effect of hepatitis in the state of Indiana!

Also, don't forget to share this newsletter with your partners and other interested organizations!

#### Spotlight on...

#### **World Hepatitis Day**

World Hepatitis Day is an annual event that each year provides international focus for people living with hepatitis B and C. It is an opportunity for organizations and groups to raise awareness and influence real change in disease prevention and access to testing and treatment.

The World Hepatitis Alliance is a not-for-profit international umbrella Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) whose membership is composed of organizations working in the field of viral hepatitis. Through better awareness, prevention, care, support and access to treatment, our ultimate goal is to work with governments to eradicate chronic viral hepatitis B or C from the planet.

The World Hepatitis Alliance first launched World Hepatitis Day in 2008 in response to the concern that chronic viral hepatitis did not have the level of awareness, nor the political priority, of other communicable diseases.

World Hepatitis Day has two main themes this year:

1. **This is hepatitis. Know it. Confront it.:** This theme was launched in 2010 and focuses on the real-life impact of viral hepatitis.
2. **See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil:** The message from this theme is that hepatitis is being ignored around the world, and we are calling for that to change. The proverb is widely recognized.

To access World Hepatitis Day Posters click [here](#).

#### **Hepatitis B Strategic Plan**

Hep B United, a national campaign to address the public health challenge of hepatitis B, the leading cause of liver cancer and a major health disparity among Asian Americans, arranged a partner summit in 2012 to develop a strategic response to the Health and Human Services (HHS) *Action Plan for the Prevention, Care, and Treatment of Viral Hepatitis*. To read a summary of the plan found in the June issue of the *Journal Community Health* click on the following link, <http://bit.ly/153ouHZ>.

#### **Know Hepatitis B – A New Campaign from the CDC and Partners**

In 2013, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Viral Hepatitis, along with our partner, Hep B United, launched *Know Hepatitis B*, a national communications campaign promoting hepatitis B testing among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs). This multilingual campaign has materials available in English, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese.

*Know Hepatitis B* seeks to increase awareness about this silent epidemic and encourages people who may be chronically infected with hepatitis B to get tested so they can take care of themselves and protect their families.

To check out the campaign click on the following link, <http://www.cdc.gov/knowhepatitisb/>

## **Hepatitis Resources**

### **➤ Patient Assistance Programs**

Many patient assistance programs are available to help people with the financial burden of hepatitis treatment:

- Partnership for Prescription Assistance
  - [www.pparx.org](http://www.pparx.org)
- Needy Meds
  - [www.needymeds.org](http://www.needymeds.org)
- Genentech
  - [www.genentechaccesssolutions.com](http://www.genentechaccesssolutions.com)
- Merck
  - [www.merck-cares.com](http://www.merck-cares.com)
- Vertex
  - [www.vrtx.com](http://www.vrtx.com)
- Kadmon
  - <http://kadmon.com/>
- Gilead-U.S. Advancing Access
  - <http://www.gilead.com/responsibility/us-patient-access/us-advancing-access>
- GlaxoSmithKline-GSK for you
  - [www.gskforyou.com](http://www.gskforyou.com)

- ❖ Please note that this not an exhaustive list of all patient assistance programs. Nor is this an endorsement of any pharmaceutical companies.

### **➤ Technical Consultation Report: HCV Infection in Young Persons Who Inject Drugs**

On February 26–27, 2013, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of HIV/AIDS and Infectious Disease Policy, in partnership with the National Institutes of Health, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, CDC, and other federal agencies, convened a 2-day consultation to address the emerging epidemic of hepatitis C infection among young persons who inject drugs. The purpose of the consultation was to identify and define priorities in the development of a federal response to the emergence of an epidemic of hepatitis C infection among young injectors. To read the full report click on the following link, <http://1.usa.gov/153lr2E>.

## **Viral Hepatitis Updates & News**

### **➤ Hepatitis A in a Food Handler-Indiana**

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) and the Fort Wayne Allen County Health Department (FWACHD) investigated a confirmed case of hepatitis A virus infection in a food handler who worked while infectious at the 800 Degrees Pizza Three Fires restaurant located at 5125 Illinois Road in Fort Wayne, Indiana. At this time, no other cases have been identified.

The FWACHD conducted a free drive-up vaccination clinic on June 1 and 2 for more than 1,100 patrons of the restaurant and then continued to offer vaccinations by appointment at their

Immunization Clinic through June 8. As of June 9, the window of vaccine effectiveness for this exposure has ended, and restaurant patrons will not benefit from vaccination. Patrons should instead monitor themselves for symptoms of hepatitis A and see their healthcare provider if symptoms develop.

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious virus that attacks the liver, causing fever, nausea, abdominal pain and jaundice. It is spread through exposure to feces of an infected person, either through close person-to-person contact or contaminated food or water. Once infected with hepatitis A, a person can transmit the virus for about two weeks before becoming ill until 10 days after symptoms begin. Symptoms usually last one to two weeks but can last longer. Severe complications are rare and occur more often in persons who have liver disease or a weakened immune system. Prophylaxis may reduce symptom severity or prevent illness if received within 14 days of exposure.

Providers and local health departments are encouraged to ask persons suspected of having hepatitis A if they have had possible exposure to this food handler.

### ➤ **Hepatitis A Outbreak in Frozen Berries**

The CDC reports that an outbreak of hepatitis A linked to a frozen berry mix sold at Costco stores has grown to 113 people with illnesses in eight states.

The CDC said Tuesday that illnesses have been reported in Arizona, California Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Washington.

Townsend Farms of Fairview, Ore., last week recalled its frozen Organic Antioxidant Blend, packaged under the Townsend Farms label at Costco and under the Harris Teeter brand at those stores. So far the illnesses have only been linked to the berries sold at Costco.

Craig Wilson, director of food safety at Costco, said the store is providing vaccinations for people who ate the berries within the past two weeks and is reimbursing others who have gotten the vaccine outside the store. The store has contacted about 240,000 people who purchased the berries at one of their stores, Wilson said. The company knows who bought the berries because purchases are linked to a membership card that customers present when they check out.

The Food and Drug Administration is investigating the cause of the outbreak. The CDC said the strain of hepatitis is rarely seen in North or South America but is found in the North Africa and Middle East regions. Townsend Farms has said the frozen organic blend bag includes pomegranate seeds from Turkey.

Hepatitis A is a contagious liver disease that can last from a few weeks to a several months. People often contract it when an infected food handler prepares food without appropriate hand hygiene.

To read more click on the following link, <http://bit.ly/11MDf3W>.

### ➤ **Burden of Hepatitis B in Asian American and Pacific Islander Populations**

One out of 12 Asian Americans is infected with chronic (lifelong) hepatitis B infection and two out of three are unaware that they are infected. "Asian American and Pacific Islanders make up five percent of the total population in the U.S., but account for more than 50 percent of Americans living with chronic hepatitis B," says Joan Block, executive director of the Hepatitis B Foundation. Testing will help individuals discover their infection in time to benefit from medical care and treatments, saving their lives and protecting those around them from becoming infected.

Resources and ideas of ways to promote awareness and testing for those in the Asian American and Pacific Islander populations of your communities can be viewed at <http://1.usa.gov/1oIIS8O>.

### ➤ **Best Strategies for Global HCV Eradication**

A recent article in *Liver International* examined common strategies to eliminate hepatitis C. The author states "Worldwide eradication of hepatitis C virus (HCV) is possible through a combination of prevention education, universal clinical and targeted community screening, effective linkage to care and treatment with promising new direct acting antiviral drug regimens." To read the full article, click on the following link, <http://bit.ly/17pLuYR>.